

Opening a Child Support Case

The local child support agency provides services at no cost to parents, guardians and caretakers of minor children. Our services are available regardless of marital status or income.

There are two types of cases: non-public assistance and public assistance.

Non-Public Assistance Cases:

We will open a case when you complete an application for services. You can get an application from our office.

Public Assistance Cases:

If you are receiving public assistance, we will open a case when we receive a referral from the county welfare department that is providing assistance. When the custodial party is receiving public assistance, the first \$50 of child support collected each month goes to the custodial party and the rest is used to pay back public assistance.

When a child is removed from the home, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, and placed in foster care, a child support case may be opened and one or both parents may be required to pay child support to help in the cost of foster care.

When a minor child is receiving Medi-Cal only, a case is opened to establish paternity and medical support. A child support order will also be established if requested by the parent.

Correct Information Will Help Process Your Case

Please provide as much of the following information as possible about you, your minor child(ren) and the other parent.

- Full legal names and any other names used
- Dates of birth
- Birth certificates
- Marriage certificates
- Social Security numbers
- Addresses
- Employment information, including employment history
- Income and assets (property, cars, boats)
- Child support payment records
- Copies of all existing court orders (temporary or final), including child support orders, legal divorce documents, visitation orders, restraining orders, and any other orders involving your children.



You Can Help!

The more complete information
you provide, the faster
you will see results.



Supporting California's Children

Opening a Child Support Case



COUNTY
Department of
Child Support Services

What You Can Expect Once Your Case is Opened

Once your case is opened, we will follow up on the information you have given us. The local child support agency will send you a letter with your case information within two weeks of opening the case.

Locate the Other Parent

If you don't know the other parent's address, we will try to obtain it. Any information you can give us to help find the other parent, like current or past jobs, addresses and earnings, will be helpful.

Establish Paternity

The local child support agency can help you establish paternity with a Paternity Opportunity Program Declaration or a court order. The Declaration is a form you can fill out that must be signed by both parents to establish paternity without going to court. The local child support agency will help you get free or low-cost testing when the child's father is in question.

Obtain a Child Support Order

Legal action will be taken to get child support from the noncustodial parent. The amount of child support is determined by the income of each parent and the amount of time each parent spends with the child, among other issues.

Enforce the Child Support Order

The local child support agency has a number of ways to collect child support for children. The most common way is by withholding part of the noncustodial parent's wages from his or her paycheck.

Interstate Cases

Child support orders can be obtained and enforced even when the other parent lives in another state.

The California Department of Child Support Services does not provide legal services to parents or guardians.



Contact us if there is a change, for you or the other party, in any of the following:

- Address
- Employment
- Custody/visitation
- Public assistance
- Court orders

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor

State of California

Kimberly Belshé, Secretary

California Health and Human Services Agency

Greta Wallace

Department of Child Support Services

1-866-249-0773 (toll free)

www.childsup.ca.gov

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